

Disadvantages of Being a Bomb Specialist or Rationalization for Hazardous-Duty Pay

Most of the bomb specialists today entered the field because of interest and dedication to serving their fellow man. Most beginners do not realize the full disadvantage of becoming a bomb specialist. A listing of the worst consequences should be discussed with a person who is thinking of choosing bomb disposal for a career. After a very busy 23 years of disposal work and injuries, I have decided that if I "understood everything that I now know about bomb disposal," I never would have become involved. It is a job that I would not wish on my worst enemy.

I am proud of my work and my accomplishments. At the beginning I was offended at remarks that I was crazy or stupid for doing bomb disposal. I now realize that they were correct. I was ignorant of the disadvantages of bomb disposal and did not have the good sense to recognize how extensive the disadvantages are.

This same list of disadvantages can be used to show the public, administration, and management the reasons for hazardous-duty pay and provide argument for their four goals in departmental budgets. Every bomb specialist needs:

1. SUFFICIENT TRAINING, which means perpetual training.
2. PROPER EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES.
3. A TABLE OF ORGANIZATION that all members of a bomb squad are assigned for normal cohesiveness and coordination of all their efforts.
4. PROCEDURES within the bomb squad so that the specialists is able to make decisions as to the safest methods of disposal and that disposal will be performed only by bomb specialists.

Prior to a person becoming a bomb specialist he should be forewarned:

1. The effects of injuries or death that may result from bombs, which may be permanently disabling and disfiguring. Common injuries are loss of fingers, hands, eyes, ears, lungs, and internal injuries to the digestive system and brain, causing paralysis and loss of memory and reasoning.
2. The hospitalization and disability benefits of some departments do not provide for adequate permanent care.
3. Relatives may then have to bear the burden of physically and financially caring for a blinded, deaf, amputee, who has become a mental vegetable with severe digestive and pulmonary problems and in constant pain.
4. If a bomb specialist is killed, then insurance will never adequately provide for

the financial and psychological needs of the victim's family.

5. Anxiety develops not only for a bomb specialist who has a lot of bombs, but also causes anxiety for his family, friends, and associates.

6. Bomb specialists are almost always on call 24 hours a day and very seldom does a department provide additional pay for this expense.

7. A bomb specialist is usually left in a category that does not make him eligible for promotion due to civil service classification or lack of experience and training in supervision and administration.

8. A bomb specialist who works diligently for equipment, training, procedures and a table of organization may find that he may become unpopular with his administration. The publicity that the job creates may cause friction within a department. Both of these are common reasons for damaging bomb specialists' careers.

9. As ever bomb specialist knows, often relatives, neighbors, and associates of bomb victims are injured or killed by mistake. Bomb specialists are targets of some bombers.

10. Bomb disposal requires dirty, hard manual labor and long hours.

11. Bomb disposal specialists have many interruptions of their private life beyond the normal eight hour days.

The main advantages of being a bomb specialist are:

1. Membership in an elite group of individuals.
2. Satisfaction in performing service for society.
3. A fascinating career.

- TOM BRODIE MBE

SHOW me a young idealist who is demanding the right to change a world he hasn't lived in long enough to know anything about, or contribute anything to, and I'll show you a pest. But show me a student who "merely wishes to make a good living" and I'll show you a kid who's going to be of service to his fellowmen, because that's the only way he *can* make a good living.

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